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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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SECURITY INFORMATION

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THE SOURCE EVALUATIONS IN THIS REPORT ARE DEFINITIVE.
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1. The greatest feeling of dissatisfaction in the Armenian border area is caused by poor economic conditions. The people are on the verge of starvation and all that an individual thinks of is how to get enough bread to sustain him. There are no means and no chance for an individual even to think of procuring adequate clothing or household necessities. The latter are out of the question. There is a feeling among the people that they are neither living nor dead (ne umerayut i ne zhyvut) and that death would be preferable to such an existence.
2. [redacted] the Azerbaydzhanis fare even worse. In the settlements of Gyullibulag and Shurabat where both Armenians and Azerbaydzhanis live, the latter have been denied a government loan for the past eight years on the pretext that there was not enough to go around. During the period 1941-49, people were actually dying from starvation. [redacted] that 25 per cent of the people in this area died of starvation. After World War II, the food situation became even worse, and the people resorted to eating grass, herbs, and weeds.
3. The people of this border area are also dissatisfied with the Soviet government because of its disregard for human rights. The government uses the individual as it sees fit. [redacted] 99 per cent of the people who are not in the Communist Party are dissatisfied with the present government.
4. The only individuals who fare better than the ordinary people of the kolkhozy are the petty officials, some of whom are members of the Communist Party. There are not many complaints from these officials but [redacted] they, too, would express their dissatisfaction except for the fear of losing what little privilege and social standing they enjoy.

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5. There is no dissatisfaction, unrest, or opposition to the Soviet policy on religion. Church services are forbidden but if any interest is expressed in religion at all, it is done in secret.
6. There is no conflict between minority groups. The Armenians and the Azerbaydzhanis get along well together even to the point of intermarrying.
7. Opposition and unrest among the people is swiftly and severely dealt with by the government. Those who express dissatisfaction are "immediately put away". As a result, the people are forced to act docile. However, the people bear a deep hatred for the Soviet government, but will be ready for active opposition only when they know that their opposition will be adequately supported by a strong internal or external force.

1. Comment. Gyullibulag and Shurabat are very small settlements in the Armenian-Turkish border area near Leninakan (N 40-48, E 43-50).

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2. Comment. Presumably those who died, 25 per cent died as a result of starvation.